

GREEN BUILDING, USGBC AND LEED

February 2010



The U.S. Green Building Council is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future for our nation through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. Green buildings increase productivity, improve health, conserve the Earth's resources, and cost less to operate and maintain. They are becoming highly-prized assets for companies, communities and people across the country.

USGBC is the acknowledged leader in green building and development. USGBC's LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System™ has provided the reliable building design and performance measurement systems that building owners and operators need to promote sustainability in the built environment. Founded in 1993, USGBC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. With a community comprising nearly 80 local affiliates, more than 20,000 member companies and organizations, and more than 140,000 LEED credentialed professionals, USGBC leads a diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists, corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials and concerned citizens, and teachers and students.

A staff of more than 200 professionals supports an extensive program of education, information and advocacy that is anchored by the LEED Green Building Rating System. LEED is a voluntary standards and certification program that defines high-performance green buildings and encompasses all building types including New Construction, Existing Buildings, Commercial Interiors, Core & Shell, Schools, Homes, Neighborhoods and Healthcare. USGBC's education workshops, chapter programs in more than 80 communities, and the annual Greenbuild conference provide a strong foundation for green building education.

LEED provides a complete framework for meeting sustainability goals and assessing building performance in six categories: Sustainable Sites; Water Efficiency; Energy and Atmosphere; Materials and Resources; Indoor Environmental Quality; and Innovation and Design process. Four progressive levels of LEED certification—Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum—can be achieved based on the number of points awarded to a building project. Certain prerequisites must be achieved in order to qualify for certification.

With more than 4,400 certified projects and over 27,000 registered projects, USGBC has extensive experience in assessing, documenting and administering what has become the leading green building rating system in the United States. Consensus-based and scientifically driven, LEED provides well-defined processes for incorporating constantly evolving practices and technologies.

A current example of LEED's constant evolution is the April 2009 launch of LEED v3, which includes the enhanced green building rating system, "LEED 2009," the improved and streamlined online registration platform and the large-scale expansion of our certification model through third-party ISO accredited certification review bodies. This new rating system includes new technology and addresses urgent priorities like energy use and CO₂ emissions.

As a third-party certification system, LEED validates achievement and establishes leadership in the green building sector. LEED provides a clear roadmap for sustainable design and, once constructed, ensures its performance by documenting that the structure is built as designed.

As the following statistics make abundantly clear, LEED stands alone as the preeminent green building rating system in the United States:

\$36-49 billion: The annual market for green building in products and services
(McGraw Hill Construction (2009). *Green Outlook 2009: Trends Driving Change.*)

Almost 7.5 billion: Square feet of commercial building space registered or certified under the LEED® Green Building Rating System™

140,000+: LEED credentialed professionals

20,000: USGBC member organizations, including corporations, governmental agencies, and nonprofits

4,416: Total commercial LEED-certified projects

27,025: Total commercial LEED-registered projects

15,862: Building projects are LEED for New Construction registered and an additional 5,090 building projects have completed LEED-NC certification

2,772: Building projects have registered with LEED for Commercial Interiors and an additional 1,075 have completed certification

4,148: Building projects have registered with LEED for Existing Buildings and an additional 441 have completed certification

2,885: Building projects have registered with LEED for Core and Shell and an additional 372 have completed certification

23,807: Residential units have registered with LEED for Homes and an additional **4,947** have completed certification

29%: of LEED certified projects owned by federal, state, and local governments

International:

100+: Countries with LEED projects

States:

50: States with LEED projects

33: States have adopted LEED

Local:

202: Local Governments have adopted LEED

When compared to structures built to conventional construction standards, green buildings experience:

26: Percent less energy consumed

33: Percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions

13: Percent lower maintenance costs

27: Percent higher occupant satisfaction

(GSA Public Buildings Service. "Assessing green building performance: A post occupancy evaluation of 12 GSA buildings" (2008).)

Investments in green buildings pay dividends and reap rewards, on average resulting in:

6.6: Percent improvement on return on investment

8-9: Percent reduction in operating costs

7.5: Percent increase in building value

3.5: Percent increase in occupancy ratio

(McGraw-Hill Construction. "Green Building SmartMarket Report" (2006).)